



# The New River Improvement Project



A Project of the California Mexico Border Relations Council and the City of Calexico

## New River Improvement Project

### Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

Calexico Library

Heber St.

Calexico, California 92243

Thursday

November 18, 2010

2:00 p.m.

### Meeting Notes

- 1) **Welcome and Introductions.** The New River Improvement Project Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Chair Ricardo Martinez (California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)) was unable to attend and Jose Angel was the designated chair in his absence. Jose called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. and welcomed all attendees. In attendance were the following committee members /designees/alternates: Daniel Garza (California Environmental Protection Agency alternate), Jose Angel (Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board alternate TAC Chair), Miguel Figueroa (Calexico New River Committee), Luis Estrada (City of Calexico), Luis Olmedo (Comité Cívico del Valle), Steve Charlton (Imperial Irrigation District designee), Antonio Ortega (Office of Assembly Member V. Manuel Perez designee), Linsey Dale (Imperial County Farm Bureau), Jonathan Ballard (U.S. General Services Administration), and Leon Lesicka (Citizens Congressional Task Force on the New River). Committee members in attendance by phone were Dr. Marilyn Underwood (California Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Branch), Wayne Belzer (International Boundary and Water Commission alternate). Committee members unable to attend included Ricardo Martinez (California Environmental Protection Agency), Ema Rosa Silva (Calexico Community Representative/Vecinos de Calexico), Anna Malloy (California Department of Fish and Game, Bermuda Dunes Office), Andy Horne (County of Imperial designee), Eduardo Demesa (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Frank Gonzalez (CalTrans), Lisa Santana (International Boundary and Water Commission). Also in attendance were: Juanita Salas (Office of Congressman Bob Filner), John Bana (U.S. General Services Administration), Katy Trumbull (U.S. General Services Administration), Dr. Lee Schull (a consultant, CYAForensics), John McCaull (a consultant - by phone), and facilitators Carl Nettleton and Gabriela Coverdale.
- 2) **Acceptance of Meeting Notes of November 4, 2010, Meeting.** Upon motion, Ortega, second, Ballard, the notes from the November 4, 2010, meeting were unanimously accepted as presented.

- 3) **TAC Chair Update.** Designated Chair Jose Angel reported there were no updates from Chair Ricardo Martinez who has been busy with the Governors Global Climate Change Summit and was unable to attend. Committee members were reminded to submit the signature page from the Charter to Carl Nettleton.
- 4) **Approval of Work Plans.**
  - a) **Impairments/Remediation Work Group.** Chair Jose Angel reported there were no changes to the proposed work plan for his work group and that the work plan only addressed impairments. A work plan for remediation will be developed separately. Upon motion, Ballard, second, Ortega, the work plan was approved as presented.
  - b) **New River Visioning Work Group.** Chair Miguel Figueroa reported there were no changes to the proposed work plan for his work group. Upon motion, Olmedo, second, Ballard, the work plan was approved as presented.
  - c) **Funding/Background Work Group.** Designated Chair Dan Garza reported there were no changes to the proposed work plan for his work group. Upon motion, Ballard, second, Estrada, the work plan was approved as presented.
- 5) **Update from Workgroups.** The workgroup discussions included the following:
  - a) **Impairments/Remediation.** Several tasks on the work plan have already been completed. At the last meeting recommendations were made for short term monitoring. The Regional Board will pick up the cost, but in the short term, for one month, the TAC agreed to fund the effort at the November 4 meeting. The Steering Committee will be asked to approve this funding. Short-term sampling that was submitted has started. The CalTrans portion of the work plan will be done the second week in December. The Department of Toxics and Substance Control will help to analyze the floodplain. Jose met with three senior geologists. They may need some assistance to pay for a special rig to take core samples in the river bed and the flood plain. The cost would be approximately \$10,000. The plan is coming together and cost estimates are being made. Robert Vinzie is leading the effort and will have a refined cost in the next two weeks.
  - b) **New River Visioning.** Several items have been achieved. Jon Ballard has done a great job providing documentation regarding the work plan, as has the City, that take into consideration what they have done. The group will be reaching out to those north of Calexico to obtain their vision. That portion of the public outreach falls under the work plan as well. Collaboration with community representative and others is important.
  - c) **Funding/Background.** Antonio Ortega provided a report on funding sources that are or might be available to fund future costs (attached). They include \$4 million from The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (TEA-LU), \$10 million from the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) for

wastewater infrastructure, a \$600,000 request from Senator Boxer and Congressman Filner from the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Requests to re-route the New River away from developed areas, \$100,000 request from Congressman Filner to complete a feasibility study for the cleanup of the New River, \$800,000 from the State River Parkway Program to match the TEA-LU federal funds mentioned above, and \$400,000 from the State Water Resources Control Board's Cleanup and Abatement Fund to develop the New River Strategic Plan. In addition, a number of supplemental environmental projects have been approved by the Department of Toxics and Substance Control and they will be included in the background information.

6) **Preparation for December 9 Public Meeting.** As requested by the Committee, the following draft items were prepared and ready for discussion in anticipation of the December 9 public meeting.

- a) December 9 public meeting work plan
- b) Media advisory
- c) Press release
- d) Short announcement suitable for organizational newsletters
- e) Announcement flyer
- f) Comments sheet
- g) Presentation boards, including:
  - i) Overview
  - ii) Map of the watershed
  - iii) Impairments and Remediation Work Group board
  - iv) Visioning Work Group board
  - v) Funding and Background Work Group board

Earlier in the meeting, Jose Angel had questioned whether the group was ready to move forward with the public meeting. After significant discussion, it was decided by consensus that the public meeting would be held in January and the December 9 Technical Advisory Committee meeting (later changed to December 15) would be used to complete the work necessary for that meeting.

8) **Next Steps.** As stated in item 6 above, the next steps involve completing the work for the January public meeting.

9) **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:15 p.m.